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NOTES AND MEMORANDA

RELATING TO THE

WEST NEW JERSEY SOCIETY,

OF

WEST NEW JERSEY,

COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND ARRANGED BY

JOHN CLEMENT,

HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY.

CAMDEN, N. J.:

S. CHEW, PRINTER AND STATIONER, FRONT AND MARKET STREETS.

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THE WEST NEW JERSEY SOCIETY.

The judicious management of the insolvent estate of Edward Byllynge, by William Penn, Gawin Lawrie and Nicholas Lucas, his trustees ; as well as the advance of that which they held for the benefit of his creditors ; left after all his debts were paid, sufficient for himself during life, with considerable remainder to his two daughters.

The ninety undivided parts of West New Jersey saved from the complications with John Fenwick, by the business penetration and firmness of the arbitrator, and by which most of his debts were discharged, soon assumed proportions of value that exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine. Religious and political events about that period had culminated in Great Britain, whose importance could not be disregarded by the government, nor come wholly within its control.

The creditors of Edward Byllynge being mostly of the Society of Friends ; naturally looked towards the territory of West New Jersey, not only as a place to inhabit, but used all legitimate means to advance their individual interests in that direction. Hence the influences thus concentrated for the one purpose, went as well to advance that part left after all demands had been discharged.

The scheme of creating proprietories, or individual interests, originated with Byllynge's trustees, and proved the means that produced those results, although it was not understood or well received by the London or Yorkshire Friends, for the reason that doubts existed among them as to its feasibility, and the danger of still having trouble with other and more stubborn creditors. Apart from

some few political difficulties, it worked well, and met the expectations of its originators.

The plan of dividing the territory into ten equal parts, and of allotting the tenths among the then owners, had been suggested, as appears, by an order entered in the records of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, which reads as follows :

“August 8th and 9th, 1682, ordered that Daniel Leeds, Surveyor, on or before the 7th of the 10th month next ; begins to lay forth the several tenths, first, to take the extent of the river from St. Pink to Cape May, and divide into ten equal parts.”

For some reason this order was never carried out so far as appears by the record, and the system of proprietories was adopted and has been continued to the present day.

Edward Byllynge died on the 16th day of the 11th month, (February) A. D., 1684, leaving two daughters, his only surviving children and heirs at law ; Gracia married Benjamin Bartlett, and Loveaday, who died single ; to whom all his estate passed, and who, subsequently were the grantors of their father's interest in West New Jersey.

Doctor Daniel Coxe, of London, (who held a prominent place at Court, he being physician to the Queen of Charles the Second, and also to Queen Anne), became the purchaser by several deeds, showing there was some complication about the title not fully understood, even at that time by the contracting parties.

Perhaps the best explanation of the matter can be given by noticing the several deeds in chronological order, as found in the different offices of record in New Jersey.

It is proper, at this point, to state that five whole shares were conveyed by the trustees of Edward Byllynge to his son-in-law Benjamin Bartlett, June 7th, 1680, some four years before Byllynge's death.

The first conveyance to Doctor Coxe was by Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia his wife, for these five shares, February 18th, 1686, and seven days after Loveaday Byllynge conveyed to the same person all her rights in her father's estate in West New Jersey.

October 5th, A. D., 1688, Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia his wife, conveyed to Doctor Coxe all their rights in the estate of Edward Byllynge in West New Jersey.

Before this last date Loveaday Byllynge had deceased, and Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia his wife, by deed dated November 10th, A. D., 1688, conveyed to Doctor Daniel Coxe all the remaining interest of Loveaday Byllynge in her father's estate in West New Jersey.

Before September 16th, A. D., 1691, Benjamin Bartlett had died, as at that date Gracia Bartlett conveyed to Doctor Coxe a moiety of her father's estate in West New Jersey, and December 6th, following, conveyed another moiety of the territory.

Two days after the date of the last named deed Gracia Bartlett, “surviving daughter and heir of Edward Byllynge, deceased, widow and administratrix of Benjamin Bartlett, deceased, who was principal creditor of said Edward Byllynge, deceased,” made an agreement with Daniel Coxe to carry out a

previous agreement made October 6th, 1688, between Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia his wife, and the said Daniel Coxe to convey certain proprietary rights, lands and moneys secured by mortgage in New Jersey, as well the heir of her father, as administratrix of her husband, which said agreement of September 18th, 1691, appears to have been lost or mislaid.

Daniel Coxe subsequently conveyed to his son Daniel Coxe all the remainder of his estate in New Jersey, and the son deeming it necessary to have some further assurance of title from the heir of Edward Byllynge, obtained from Gracia Bartlett, (September 12th, 1728,) a deed ratifying and confirming the said lost agreement; and also conveying any and all remainders of real estate, mortgages and moneys in West New Jersey, coming to her from her father or husband. Although not involved in the estate of the West New Jersey Society, yet it shows the final extinguishment of Edward Byllynge's title to land in New Jersey.

The necessity of these several deeds is apparent when it is remembered that Doctor Coxe held that he was entitled to the right of government as well as the title to the soil.

In this connection it is proper to notice a question, the settlement of which led to much paper warfare and bitterness of feeling, prevented the advance of the colony, and kept many influential and enterprising persons away. *This was the right of government.*

In the grant of King Charles the Second to the Duke of York, and from him to Carteret and Berkley the rights to govern the territory passed with the title to the soil.

March 18th, 1673-'74, John Lord Berkley conveyed his undivided half part of New Jersey to John Fenwick, from which deed came much trouble and dispute, and which eventuated in William Penn, as arbitrator, declaring nine-tenths of the estate so conveyed was in Edward Byllynge, although he did not appear in the transactions, and leaving but one-tenth thereof to John Fenwick, the sole grantee.

February 10th, 1674-'75, John Fenwick and Edward Byllynge joined in a conveyance of the ninety parts aforesaid to William Penn, Gawin Laurie and Nicholas Lucas, as trustees, who (together with Edward Byllynge) conveyed sufficient of said territory of West New Jersey to various persons to pay Byllynge's debts. The grant of Berkley to Fenwick likewise conveyed the right of government, and which right passed to the trustees and those holding under them. The separation of the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the government by the concessions and agreements (March 3d, 1676-'77) was in accordance with the understood and recognized authority under the several grants from the king down to Byllynge's trustees.

Many colonists came with the London and Yorkshire Commissioners into the territory in 1677, but the first general free assembly for the province of West New Jersey was not held until November, 1681, and then pursuant to a call made by Samuel Jennings, as the deputy of Edward Byllynge, who had been appointed Governor by the Proprietors in England.

The people through the Legislature acknowledged this appointment and recognized his authority as the chief executive, until he was elected by the same body, and took the oath of office May 11th, 1683.

Previous to this, however, and during the sitting of the same Legislature, a number of queries were submitted to that body in relation to the right of Edward Byllynge to exercise the power of appointing a Governor for the Province, curious enough in themselves, and showing clearly the dissatisfaction that existed among the people touching this part of their franchises, as derived from the grants before named. There was no ambiguity in the wording of the queries or the separate vote taken upon the resolves. The importance of the questions involved was appreciated and the time had come for their final determination and settlement. There was no ill feeling expressed toward Edward Byllynge, yet as they regarded it, the wording and intention of the two deeds under which they were acting were clear and explicit, and their true import and meaning could not be mistaken.

With characteristic prudence, these Friends thought best to address a letter to certain other Friends in London (containing the queries and resolves) to know of Edward Byllynge whether he still claimed the prerogative of appointing the Governor of the Province, which they regarded as an infringement of their rights in that direction.

The next year Samuel Jennings and Thomas Budd were delegated to proceed to England and strive to adjust this difficulty, leaving Thomas Olive as Deputy Governor, who was soon after appointed Governor by the Legislature. The visit of Samuel Jennings and Thomas Budd failed of its purpose, as Edward Byllynge sent a commission to John Skene as his Deputy Governor, whom the Legislature recognized, and submitted to his authority. This was Edward Byllynge's last official act, as he soon after died. Daniel Coxe (as before shown become the owner of Byllynge's properties in West New Jersey, the titles to which also passed all the prerogatives attached to Byllynge) was appointed Governor by the Proprietors in England. During his incumbency, no laws appear to have been enacted; the people remaining in much disquietude and apparently without means of redress.

Governor Coxe, soon after his appointment, addressed a letter (September 5, 1687,) to the Council of Proprietors of West New Jersey, that being the only organized representative body within the province, and through whom he could reach the people. Samuel Smith regarded this letter of such historic value that he introduced it in full, as a foot-note in his history of New Jersey.

He (Coxe), says, his purchase of Edward Byllynge's interest was prompted by the desire to bring together in a few individuals the already scattered ownerships, so that the government as well as the sale of land, could be more easily managed.

The question of such vital importance to the purchasers—the right of government, and the appointment of the executive officer—is squarely met and denied, for the reason as claimed, that the concessions and agreements as adopted by the proprietors (March 3d, 1676) was an enlargement upon the several grants previously made for the territory in question, and before Edward Byllynge had obtained the right of government, (September 3d, 1680), and that he as Byllynge's representative should exercise all the powers granted in the last named deed, and assume the position of Governor of the Province of West New Jersey. He intimates that overtures had been made to William Penn for the

adoption of some other methods by which the present troubles could be got clear of, and offered to yield his position if a more acceptable person could be chosen by the people for Governor, and convey his interest to any person or persons they might name. The concessions and agreements met his approbation, and are by him ratified and shall be observed. Many assurances are extended to the people of his interest in their welfare and desire for their prosperity.

Other questions are discussed not bearing on this particular point, but showing his knowledge of the condition of affairs in the colony, and of the troubles that surrounded the settlers there.

Edward Hunloke was by him appointed Deputy Governor, who was succeeded by John Tatham, under the same authority; but the political difficulties much hindered the coming of emigrants and the advancement of the colony.

Despairing of an adjustment of the many complications that delayed, and well nigh defeated the original purpose of the adventurers into New Cæsaria, Daniel Coxe conveyed his interest therein, to a company of gentlemen in London, who had formed themselves into an association for the more effectual development of their purchase, and the better to control so large an undertaking, and who adopted the title and name of "*The West New Jersey Society.*"

This terminated Daniel Coxe's connection with the government and the larger part of his interest in the soil of the territory in question, but did not end the existing troubles which will not be further inquired into for the purposes of this article, excepting so far as Coxe's grantees were incidentally concerned.

March 4th, A. D., 1691, (the fourth year of the reign of William and Mary of England), Daniel Coxe, Governor and chief proprietor of West New Jersey, and other adjacent lands and territories thereunto belonging in America, and Rebecca, his wife, of the first part, conveyed to Jonathan Greenwood, citizen of London; Peter Gayon, citizen of London, of the second part; and Sir Thomas Lane, Knight of London; Michael Watts, merchant, of London; Edward Harrison, merchant of London; Thomas Skinner, of Plewlick, in Dorsetshire; James St. John, goldsmith, London; Nicholas Haywood, merchant, London; Mordecai Abbott, gentleman; Nicholas Battersby, merchant, London; Robert Curtis, gentleman, London; John Jwrin, merchant, London; Richard Broomhall, gentleman, London; Robert Michel, merchant, London; Charles Michel, merchant, London; James Boddington, citizens and cloth merchants, London; John Gunston, merchant, London; Arthur Shallett, merchant, London; John Lamb, merchant, London; William Wightman, gentleman, London; Henry Harrington, merchant, London; John Love, merchant, London; Thomas Phipps, linen draper, London; Isaac Cocks, merchant tailor, London; John Sweetable, goldsmith, Lombard street, London; Thomas Broomfield, gentleman, London; John Norton, merchant, London; Robert Hackshaw, merchant, London; John Bridges, merchant, London; Joseph Paice, merchant, London; Edward Richer, Mercer, London; William Dunah, Lincoln's Inn, Middlesex; Edward Habbersfield, gentleman, Middle Temple, London; John A. Wertson, merchant, London; Edward West, gentleman, London. Edward Pamsford, gentleman, London; Obadiah Burnett, merchant, London; Francis Michel, citizen and merchant, London; Benjamin Steele, merchant, London; John Slaney, merchant, London; Nehemiah Ewing, gentleman, London; John Wilcox,

merchant tailor, London; Richard Mayo, gentleman, London; Jonathan Nethaway, citizen and draper, London; William Brooks, gentleman, London; Tracy Panefort, gentleman, London; Joseph Allen, silkman, London, and Richard Greenway, citizen and clothworker, London, of the third part (in consideration of the payment of four thousand eight hundred pounds upon the execution and delivery of the deed, and security by mortgage upon one-third of the estate for the further payment of five thousand pounds, in one year from that date.)

Five whole shares of propriety of West New Jersey, containing 32,000 acres each, known as "Bartlett's Five Proprieties," and conveyed to Daniel Coxe by Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia, his wife, of London (he now deceased), by one deed dated February 18th, A. D. 1690; four whole shares of propriety of West New Jersey, part of ten proprieties owned by John Hind, draper, of London, which said four shares of propriety, with one other full share, was conveyed to Daniel Coxe by John Brown and Sir Thomas Lane, of London, merchants, by one deed dated July 13, 1687, known as "Brown & Lane's properties;" one full share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Daniel Coxe by Edward Byllynge, by deed dated January 9th, A. D. 1684; two-sevenths of one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Daniel Coxe by Elizabeth Harris, by deed dated March 5th, A. D. 1684.

One whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Daniel Coxe by Charles Madge, (son of Humphrey Madge) by deed dated January 6th, 1687; one-half of one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Daniel Coxe, by Charles Madge, (last above) by two deeds dated May 17th, and May 30th, A. D., 1685; one-third of one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Daniel Coxe, by John Hyde, by deed dated May 13th, A. D., 1685, known as the "Ougle's third; one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed by Edward Byllynge, to Robert Squibb, by deed dated October 8th, A. D., 1686, and by an endorsement on said deed conveyed by Squibb to Daniel Coxe; one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, mortgaged by Edward Byllynge to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated March 1st, A. D., 1683, of which Daniel Coxe became seized by forfeiture, &c.; two whole shares of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed to Benjamin Bartlett and Gracia his wife (late Byllynge), and Robert West, by Edward Byllynge, and which they conveyed to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated February 26th, A. D., 1686, known as "West's two proprieties;" two whole shares of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed by Thomas Sadler to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated January 12th, A. D., 1690, known as "Sadler's two proprieties;" one whole share of propriety of West New Jersey, conveyed by John Brayman to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated February 3d, A. D., 1691; also six-sevenths of one whole share conveyed by the same deed, (the first known as "Robert Schooley's proprieties;" a tract of land contiguous to West New Jersey, called "Minnissink province," containing 200,000 acres of land; two whole shares of propriety of East New Jersey, one conveyed by Edward Byllynge to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated March 20th, 1685, known as "West's propriety of East New Jersey," the other conveyed by Robert West and Thomas Coxe, to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated December 5th, A. D., 1684, known as "Mew's proprieties," and containing 50,000 acres; three whole shares in the county of Merrimack, in New England, con-

taining 100,000 acres, lately purchased of Edward Randolph and Edmund Harrison; 10,000 acres in Pennsylvania, conveyed by William Penn to Daniel Coxe, by deed dated April 20th, A. D., 1686; a dwelling house and pottery house in the town of Burlington, lately erected, with all the tools: all the town lots in Perth Amboy, held by Daniel Coxe; all the town lots at, and near Gloucester town and Egg Harbor, in West New Jersey, and all other lands in West New Jersey, held by Daniel Coxe, in his own right, or by others in trust for him; excepting always, the land sold by Daniel Coxe to John Coldham, of Foreting Graveney, in the county of Sussex, England, it being a tract in West New Jersey above the falls, purchased of the Indians by Adlord Bowd, and surveyed by James Budd, containing 30,000 acres.

Also, one-half of ten whole shares of propriety in West New Jersey, conveyed by John Fenwick to Edmund Warner and John Edridge; also, one-half of John Fenwick's lands, called Fenwick Colony; also, 4,500 acres, the residue of 10,000 acres heretofore granted by John Fenwick to Edmund Warner and conveyed by Warner to Daniel Coxe: also, the tenements and hereditaments in West New Jersey, conveyed by Daniel Coxe to John Coldham as aforesaid:—*To the said Jonathan Greenway and Peter Guyon for the uses following (the whole into 1,600 parts to be divided)* as follows:

50 equal parts to Sir Thomas Lane; 70 equal parts to Michael Watts; 70 equal parts to Edmund Harrison; 70 equal parts to Thomas Skinner; 60 equal parts to James St. John; 60 equal parts to Michael Hayward; 55 equal parts to Mordecai Abbott; 40 equal parts to Nicholas Battersby; 40 equal parts to Robert Curtis; 40 equal parts to John Jwrin; 40 equal parts to Richard Bromhall; 40 equal parts to Robert Michel; 40 equal parts to Charles Michel; 40 equal parts to James Buddington; 40 equal parts to John Gunston; 30 equal parts to Arthur Shallett; 30 equal parts to John Lamb; 30 equal parts to William Wightman; 30 equal parts to Joseph Breaksbank; 30 equal parts to William Thompson; 30 equal parts to Henry Harrington; 30 equal parts to John Love; 30 equal parts to Thomas Phipps; 30 equal parts to Isaac Cocke; 30 equal parts to John Sweetapple; 30 equal parts to Thomas Broomfield; 30 equal parts to John Norton; 30 equal parts to Robert Hackshaw; 30 equal parts to John Bridget; 30 equal parts to Joseph Paice; 20 equal parts to Edward Richer; 20 equal parts to William Neunah; 20 equal parts to Edward Stabbersfield; 20 equal parts to John Albertson; 20 equal parts to Edward West; 20 equal parts to Edward Pancefort; 20 equal parts to Obadiah Burnett; 20 equal parts to Francis Michel; 20 equal parts to Benjamin Steele; 20 equal parts to John Slaney; 20 equal parts to Nehemiah Ewing; 20 equal parts to John Wilcocks; 20 equal parts to Richard Mayo; 15 equal parts Jonathan Nathaway; 10 equal parts to William Brooks; 10 equal parts to Tracy Pannsefort; 10 equal parts to Joseph Allen; 10 equal parts to Richard Greenway.

Explanations in regard to the situation of certain estates are entered in the deed of conveyance, and to guard against loss to the grantees touching the questionable title of the "Minissink Province," the sum of four hundred pounds was to remain unpaid until it was settled.

The Minissink Province or Patent lay between the river Delaware and the Blue Mountains, partly in the county of Sussex, New Jersey, and partly in the

counties of Ulster and Orange, New York, including three islands in the Delaware river. It comprised much valuable territory and was soon occupied by settlers. The title was confirmed by Queen Anne in 1704, and the whole tract subsequently divided by commissioners among the owners. It was first divided into two lots, then each again into forty-six lots, and assigned by ballot to those interested. The description of the outlines is a curiosity in the way of boundary and has led to much conflict of claims and litigation as to possession: it runs as follows:

“Beginning at a certain place in Ulster county, New York, called Hunting house or Yaugh house, lying at the northeast of land called Bashes land; then to run west by north until it meets with the Fishkill or main branch of Delaware river; then to run southerly to the south end of Great Minissink island; thence due south to the land granted to John Bridges and company, and so along that patents as it now runs northward and the patents of Captain John Evans, and then to the place it first began.”

Relating to the “uses” before named the deed further says: “To have and to hold all and every of the lands, tenements, hereditaments and premises mentioned to be hereby granted and released to the said Jonathan Greenway and Peter Guyon, their heirs and assigns forever, to the uses following, that is to say, as to, for and concerning fifty parts of all and every of the said lands, tenements, hereditaments and premises intended to be hereby granted and released, the whole into sixteen hundred equal parts, to be divided to the use of the said Sir Thomas Lane, his heirs and assigns forever;” and the same to the end, naming each grantor, and the number of equal parts he may be entitled to.

By the general clause in the deed—“and all other lands in West New Jersey held by Daniel Coxe in his own rights, or by others in trust for him”—the Society found itself the owner of certain surveys and parts of surveys made in the name of the grantor and lying in various parts of the colony. The most important of these was the “95,000 acres survey,” made in Cape May by John Budd and John Worlidge for Doctor Coxe in 1690–1691. This survey in fact included the whole of Cape May county, as the line running from Delaware bay to Tuckahoe river as represented on the map returned by Budd and Worlidge to the Surveyor General, subsequently became the boundary between the counties of Cape May and Cumberland. The importance of this line is shown in the frequency of its being run and marked, as in 1716, James Alexander, Surveyor General, surveyed and renewed the marks, and in 1754, Henry Young, a Deputy Surveyor, did the same thing.

Two years after this last running of the line, the Society conveyed to Jacob Spicer all its remaining interest in said 95,000 acres survey, and the county line was adopted in the deed as part of the description made by the Society to said Spicer.

Owing to some dispute the line was again run in 1841, and settled by Commissioners, and has so remained since, as the division boundary between the two bailiwicks, and perhaps may never again be disturbed.

One cause of trouble touching this large tract of land after Jacob Spicer became the owner of the unsold parts, was the loss, by fire, of the original map of Budd and Worlidge, together with many other valuable papers relating

thereto. William Hall, one of the largest land owners in West New Jersey, was made custodian of these documents, and while in his possession, his dwelling was burned and all the contents. Litigious persons at once saw an opportunity to sustain false claims within the bound, and in some cases accomplished their ends by reason of this misfortune.

It was subsequently discovered, however, that Lewis Morris, Esq., had made copies of the originals at Salem, N. J., September 13th, 1706, and which was afterwards duplicated by David Jamison, at Burlington, N. J., February 18th, 1713.

This map had other value: as several locations are shown bounding on Maurice river and the bay, at the present time divided and subdivided until the original boundaries are nearly, or quite lost sight of.

Almost immediately upon the execution and delivery of the conveyance before named, the parties in interest began to change. Some increased their number of shares, while others adopted an opposite policy, and many dissatisfied persons withdrew altogether. This brought about many complications, and lead to much trouble among the members. The decease of persons holding shares, intestate or otherwise, increased the number of owners, and was another source of difficulty in the management of the affairs of the society. Rivalries and disputes existed from the beginning, and much hindered the success of the enterprise.

Daniel Coxe conveyed by a separate deed, bearing date as that before named, to the same grantees, the right of instituting a system of government before referred to. This instrument is carefully drawn, and is designed to show from whence this privilege came. After full recitals these words are used: "Now this indenture witnesseth, to better accomplish the purpose of government
* * * * the said Daniel Coxe doth hereby convey * * * * to the
said Sir Thomas Lane * * * * * * * * all and every
the same powers, jurisdictions, authorities and governments, as, and that were
granted, or intended to be granted, by the said Duke of York, to the said
Edward Byllynge, as aforesaid, and by the heirs of the said Edward Byllynge,
granted to the said Daniel Coxe," &c., &c.

Seventeen days after the two deeds had been procured an organization was effected by the choice of Sir Thomas Lane, as President; Edmund Harrison, Esq., as Vice President; Robert Hackstraw, as Treasurer; and Daniel Coxe, John Jurin, Mordecai Abbott, William Dunch, John Bridges, William Wightman, Nicholas Hayward, Edward Richer, James Boddington, Robert Michell and James St. John as Committeemen. An article of agreement and methods of procedure were signed by the owners, which display much business talent and a comprehensive view of the undertaking. The declared purpose is "our mutual benefit, profit and advantage," and "for the better and more orderly managing and improving of the said hereditary government, lands and tenements," showing at once that to get gain and establish a form of government were the primary objects.

The agreement, however, was not made satisfactory and fully signed until the fourth day of April, in the following year (1692), and a careful reading of which will better disclose the intentions of the persons interested than any synopsis that could be made. It is here introduced in full:

WEST JERSEY SOCIETY.
 AGREEMENT CONCERNING THEIR
 LANDS, &c., IN AMERICA.
 RECORDED NOVEMBER 16, 1744.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That
 Whereas, by Indenture bearing date the
 fourth day of March in the fourth year of
 the reign of our Lord and Lady William
 and Mary over England, Scotland, France,
 Ireland, King and Queen Defenders of the
 Faith, &c., Anno Domini 1691. Daniel

Coxe, Esq., of London, did assign, transfer, and convey to Sir Thomas Lane, of London, knight; Michael Watts, of London, merchant; Edmund Harrison, of London, merchant; Thomas Skinner, of Dawish, in the county of Dorset, esquire; James St. John, of London, goldsmith; Nicholas Hayward, of London, gentleman; Mordecai Abbott, of London, gentleman; Nicholas Battersby, of London, merchant; Robert Custis, of London, gentleman; James Jurin, of London, merchant; Richard Brownhall, of London, gentleman; Robert Mitchell, of London, merchant; Charles Mitchell, of London, merchant; James Boddington, citizen and cloth maker, of London; John Gunston, of London, merchant; Arthur Hallett, of London, merchant; John Lambe, of London, merchant; William Wightman, of London, gentleman; Joseph Brookbank, citizen and haberdasher, of London; William Thompson, of London, merchant; Thomas Phipps, of London, linen draper; Isaac Coctree, of London, merchant taylor; John Sweetapple, of Lombard street, goldsmith; Thomas Broomfield, of London, gentleman; John Norton, of London, merchant; Robert Hackshaw, of London, merchant; John Bridges, of London, merchant; Joseph Paice, of London, merchant; Edward Richer, of London, merchant; William Dunch, of Lincoln's Inn, in the county of Middlesex, esquire; Edward Haberfield, of Middle Temple, London, gentleman; John Alberson, of London, merchant; Edward West, of London, gentleman; Edward Pansford, of London, gentleman; Obadiah Burnett, of London, merchant; Francis Michell, of London, citizen and merchant; Benjamin Stubbs, of London, merchant; John Slaney, of London, merchant; Nehemiah Erving, of London, gentleman; John Wicoker, of London, merchant taylor; Richard Mays, of London, gentleman; Jonathan Netheway, citizen draper, of London; William Brookes, of London, gentleman; Tracy Panford, of London, gentleman; Joseph Allen, of London, gentleman; and Richard Greenway, citizen and cloth worker, of London;—the hereditary government of West New Jersey in America.

And whereas, by one other Indenture of release, bearing date the fourth day of March in the same yeare, the said Daniel Coxe and Rebecca, his wife, did grant, bargain, sell, alien, transfer and assign unto the aforesaid persons, their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, in such proportions and for such considerations as is therein mentioned, several lands, tenements, profits, commodities and appurtenances, lying and being in several parts of America, as in and by the said three recited indentures, relation being thereunto had, doth or may more at large appear.

Now as well for the better and more orderly managing, and in proving of the said hereditary government lands and tenements, as also for our mutual benefit, profit and advantage, wee, whose names are hereunto subscribed, do hereby covenant, promise, agree and oblige ourselves, our respective heirs, executors

and assigns, separately and not jointly, or one for the other, to and with each and every of us, their, and every of their, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns in manner and form following :

Imprimis. That wee will from time to time, and at all times, when and as often as the major parte of us or our assigns shall think fitt to order the same, signified by their votes in general assembly, pay or cause to be paid to the treasurer for the time being our quoto, partes and proportions of all such sum or sums of money as the said general assembly, or the major part of them, by their votes shall order and appointe, for the raising of a stock or fund as well for the support of the said government and carrying on a trade to the said places in America, as for the promoting and carrying on of several other useful and necessary designs for our mutual advantages, which stock or fund shall be divided into sixteen hundred equal parts or shares, in the same manner, shares or proportions to each and every one of us, as the said lands and tenements are by the said deed of release limited and expressed. Provided, always, that the said sum or sums so ordered to be paid do not in the whole exceed the sum or sums of ten pounds sterling, for each share of the said sixteen hundred parts or shares; and that also three days' notice shall be given to each Proprietor when money is to be raised, and to be expressed in their summons that it is for raising of money.

Item. Wee hereby further oblige ourselves, our heirs, our executors, administrators and assigns, as aforesaid, that in case of us, our heirs, executors or assigns, shall at any time refuse or neglect to pay in his or their quoto or share of the money so ordered, within thirty days after it is lawfully demanded by any person appointed by the committee for the time being to demand the same, he and they shall lose and forfeitt to the use of all the others in common, their heirs or assigns, as well all his and their interest and share in the said government and lands, tenements, profits and appurtenances as in such stock or fund as shall or may be paid by us before the time of such refusal or neglect of payment, and together with all undivided profits or advantages of the same.

Item. That in case of the death of any of the parties to these presents, no benefit of survivorship shall be had or taken by the survivors, but the heirs, executors and administrators respectively of the person so dying, or their assigns, shall have and enjoy his part, share and proportion of the said lands, tenements and appurtenances, stock and profits as aforesaid, in as full and ample manner as if he or they were living.

Item. That all dividends that shall be made of the premises and profits shall be made according to the several shares and proportions which each person doth possess at the time of such dividend.

Item. That whereas, for the better managing and improving of the said government lands and tenements and carrying on of the said intended trade and other designs at our general meeting on the twenty-first day of March last, Sir Thomas Lane was chosen our President, and Edmund Harrison, Esq., our Vice President, and Robert Hackstraw our Treasurer, and Daniel Coxe, John Jurin, Mordecai Abbott, William Dunch, John Bridges, William Wightman, Nicholas Hayward, Edward Richier, James Boddington, Robert Michel and James St. John were chosen a committee. Wee do hereby covenant and agree as aforesaid,

that the said persons shall be and continue and act as a committee till the twenty-fifth day of March next ensuing, the date hereof.

Item. That on the said twenty-fifth day of March next ensuing, every year, unless it happens to fall on a Sunday, and then it shall be on the twenty-sixth day of March, the generality of us or our assigns shall and will meet to choose a President or Governor, Vice President or Deputy Governor, a Treasurer and eleven Committeemen or Assistants, who shall continue and constitute and be a committee for one whole year from thence next ensuing, which choice shall be made by plurality of votes, that is to say, that each and every of us or our heirs, executors and assigns shall, for every two shares he doth possess at the time of such choice, have one single vote; provided, always, that no one person shall have above ten votes, be his shares never so many, and that he that hath not at least two shares shall have no vote; provided, also, that no person shall be capable of being chosen of the said committee unless he hath and doth actually possess, according to the Society's books, at least twenty shares; and in the said choice it shall and may be lawful for any of us, our heirs, executors or assigns who cannot conveniently attend the said general meeting, to lend his or their votes by any persons signifying the same, by a vote under his or their hands, directed to the President or Governor, or to the Vice President or Deputy Governor for the time being.

Item. That as well the said Committee that is already chosen, as well as all other Committees that shall, or may succeed them, or the major part of any such five, or more of them as shall assemble in their usual place of meeting, shall be enabled, and are hereby empowered, to let and sell any lands and tenements and appurtenances; elect and choose a Deputy Governor for West Jersey, and all other factors, officers and servants, either beyond the sea or in England, and to ascertain their salary, wages and gratuity, and to cause the Treasurer for the time being, to pay any such sum or sums of the society's money, and to buy, sell, trade, build, plant and do perform, or cause to be done or performed, all and every other lawful act and acts, thing or things, as to them shall seem meet and fit for promoting our common benefit, which actt or actts so done or performed, we hereby promise, covenant and agree, to hold for good, fines and valuables, and to be concluded by the same.

Item. That twenty shillings shall be allowed and paid by the Treasurer, for the time being, to the Committee for their attendance at every meeting, to be disposed among them that meet in such manner, and to such persons as they shall appoint.

Item. That no person shall make any transfer of any part of his interest or shares but in the Company's books, and upon the acceptance of the buyer, and producing of a receipt from the seller, that the money is paid, and that upon making of every such transfer and acceptance, two shillings and sixpence shall be paid by the buyer, and the like sum by the seller, to the Secretary, for his own use, and upon the first admission of any new member to be of the society, he shall pay ten shillings to the Treasurer, for the time being, for the use of the society, and shall sign and seal these presents in the Company's book of subscriptions.

Item. That the shares of each and every of us, our heirs and assigns,

shall be liable to make good all such debts as are owing to him or them, to the said society : and also to make good all such damages and detriments as any of us or our assigns, shall cause or occasion to the society in general, by his, their, or any of their wilful acts or defaults.

Item. That the company's accounts shall be stated once a year by the committee and presented to the general court, who may if they think fit choose auditors to inspect and examine the said accounts.

Item. That all such future orders, votes, agreements and appointments as shall be, at any time ordered and agreed to by the general assembly, or the major part of them, being entered in the minute book of the Society, and read over before their departure shall be as firm, binding and valuable as if they were actually subscribed by the said general assembly, or every individual person of them.

Dated in London the fourth day of April, Anno, 1692.

Thomas Lane, Isaac Cocks, Joseph Brookbank, Edmund Harrison, Nicholas Hayward, Arthur Shallett, Robert Hackshaw, William Dunch, Joseph Allen, Mordecai Abbott, Henry Harrington, John Sweetapple, James St. John, William Thompson, Michael Watts, Edward Richier, James Boddington, Charles Michel, William Wightman, Robert Curtis, Ira Pauncefort, Obadiah Burnett, Nicholas Battersby, John Norton, Francis Michel, John Gunston, Nehemiah Earning, Joseph Pain, John Slaney, William Brookes, John Bridges, Benjamin Steele, Richard Greenaway, John Jurin, Thomas Phipps, Robert Michel, John Albertson, Edward West, John Love, Thomas Skinner, John Whiting.

NOTE.

Mr. John Lamb sold and transferred his share to Mr. John Slaney, who signed the foregoing articles.

Mr. Edward Habersfield sold and transferred his shares to Mr. John Whiting, who signed the foregoing articles.

Mr. John Wilcocks sold and transferred his shares to Sir Thomas Lane, who signed the foregoing articles.

Mr. Richard Mayo sold and transferred his shares to Mr. John Jurin, who signed the foregoing articles.

NOTE ALSO.

That the shares belonging to Mr. Richard Bromhall, Mr. Thomas Broomfield, Mr. Edward Pauncefort and Mr. Jonathan Netherway are still remaining in their own names.

The original articles of agreement whereof the foregoing is a true copy, are entered and recorded at the beginning of the transfer book belonging to the West New Jersey Society, and then signed and sealed by the respective persons before mentioned.

Witness my hand this 21st October, 1742.

JOHN STEPHENSON.

John Stephenson, of London, gentleman, maketh oath that the paper writing hereunto annexed, purporting to be articles of agreement, is a true copy of such articles as appear from the original with which this deponent has carefully examined the same, which said original articles are entered and recorded at the

beginning of the transfer book belonging to the West New Jersey Society, and is signed and sealed by the respective persons therein mentioned.

JOHN STEPHENSON.

Sworn the 21st of October, 1742, before me, GEORGE HEATHCOTE, Mayor.

To all to whom these presents shall come : I, George Heathcote, Esq., Lord Mayor of the city of London, in pursuance of an act of Parliament, made and passed in the fifth year of the reign of our Sovereign, Lord King George the Second, entitled an act for the more easy recovery of debts in His Majesty's plantations and colonies in America, do hereby certify, that on the day of the date hereof, personally came and appeared before me, John Stephenson, of London, gentleman, being a person well known and worthy of good credit, and by solemn oath, which he there took before me, upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, did solemnly and sincerely declare, testify and depose, to be true, the several matters and things mentioned and contained in the original affidavit hereunto annexed.

In faith and testimony whereof, I, the said Lord Mayor, have caused the seal of the office of Mayoralty of the said city of London, to be hereunto put and affixed, and the paper writing mentioned and referred to, in and by the said affidavit, to be hereunto also annexed.

Dated in London, the twenty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord 1742.

BAYNBRIDGE.

The manner of providing money "for the support of the said government," and for "carrying on several other useful and necessary designs," and for general purposes, has the first place in the article of agreement, and in case of neglect or refusal to pay the several sums assessed, a forfeiture was to follow, and all advantage lost to the member so in default.

The representatives of deceased members were recognized as in full interest, and should have a voice in the business proceedings of the society ; the time and manner of elections were settled, the eligibility of members to office, and the filling of vacancies arranged, and all other things provided for, necessary to carry out the objects of the association.

The committee appear to have had general charge of the affairs of the society, with power to appoint a Deputy Governor for West New Jersey, and all other factors, officers and servants, either beyond the sea, or in England. The manner of transfer of stock was carefully guarded, so that in the election of officers no wrong should be practised, or the society imposed upon. The money accounts were to be stated annually, and the proper precautions taken to provide against loss through neglect or dishonesty of officials.

The paper, taken as a whole, shows that within the verge of the Association there were clear heads, sound judgment and good business penetration.

The committee proceeded at once to select a Deputy Governor, and on the eleventh day of April, 1692, (seven days after the signing of the agreement) appointed Colonel Andrew Hamilton to that responsible position. This gentleman was not without experience in this direction, as in 1686 he had been appointed to fill the office of Deputy Governor of East New Jersey in the absence of Lord Neill Campbell from that Province,

Passing over the difficulties that surrounded him in that position, growing out of the revolution in England, in favour of William and Mary, he is found in London, in 1692, as on the 25th day of March of that year, he received his commission as Governor of East New Jersey, and as will be seen, but a short time before his appointment by the West New Jersey Society. He appears to have discharged his duty acceptably until 1697, when an act of Parliament was passed requiring the Governors of Colonies to be natural born subjects of England, and he being a native of Scotland, the place was declared vacant, much to the regret of the inhabitants. His commission from the West New Jersey Society is here given :

To our Trusty and Well-Belovéd Friend, Colonel Andrew Hamilton, greeting :

WHEREAS, the hereditary government of the Province of West New Jersey in America, by due and legall right, was lately vested in Daniell Cox, Esq., and by conveyance duly executed, hath beene by him assigned and transferred to Sir Thomas Lane, Knight; Edmund Harrison, Esq., and severall others rightfully entitled thereunto, and that by authority from them under their hands and seales, wee, the undersigned, being chosen their committee, and empowered to nominate, constitute and appoint such Deputy Governor for the well-ordering and governing the said Province as to us shall deem meet. And, wee having great confidence in the ability, prudence and integrity of you, the said Andrew Hamilton, have nominated, constituted and appointed and doe hereby nominate, constitute and appoint you our Commissioner and Deputy Governor of the said Province, giving you full power and authority to order and govern the same, together with all isles, islands, rivers and seas within the same or belonging thereto; and doe all and every thing and things, which, to the charge and office of a Governor doth appertayne, for the space or term of one whole year from the date of these presents, and soe long after untill some other person bee nominated and constituted Deputy Governor in your roome by another Commission sent from London and arrived in the said Province there to be published, on which this present commission to be voyd; commanding all inferior officers, both civil and military, to obey you, the said Andrew Hamilton, as our Commissioner or Deputy Governor, according to this, our Commission, and the powers hereby given you, and according to the laws and constitutions made or confirmed, and to be made or confirmed by us, which you, the said Deputy Governor, are yourself to observe and follow, as to your duty and office doth appear to you; as also to observe and fulfill all such orders as shall be made and sent you by us or the committee, for the time being, under the publick seale of the said province. And further, we do give you, the said Andrew Hamilton, power to nominate and appoint by commission, under your hand and seal, a Commissioner under you, to serve in the said province, during your necesary absence therefrom, but noe longer. He, the said sub-Commissioner, observing and fullfilling all such orders as shall be made and sent under the said publick seale by us, or the Committee, for the time being, and governing according to the laws and constitutions of the said province.

Given in London, under our hands and the publick seale of the said province of West New Jersey, this eleventh of Aprill, Anno Domini, 1692, and in the fourth year of our Sovereign Lord and Lady, William and Mary, by the Grace

of God, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, King and Queen defenders of the faith, &c.



Thomas Lane, Edward Harrison, Daniel Coxe, Wm. Wrightman, Robert Hackshaw, John Bridges, John Jurin, Robert Michel, James St. John, Mordecai Abbott.

The next paper that appears of record in order of time, although not connected with the society, is a power of attorney, made by Daniel Coxe to Jeremiah Basse, dated April 28th, 1692. In this, authority is given in relation to lands in West New Jersey, or wheresomever else Daniel Coxe had any interest. To settle all money accounts, sue for, recover and receive, on bond, note or other obligation; to remove trespassers from his lands, and rent and lease any of this property at such price, and for such term of years as he may deem proper. Upon the refusal of trespassers to remove from his lands, Basse to have power to arrest and imprison all such, and release therefrom when he should deem best in his judgment so to do.

The fullest confidence is reposed in Basse by Coxe, as will appear by the paper itself, which is annexed following :

By this publick instrument of proclamation or letters of attorney be it knowne and manifested unto all people, that on the eight and twentieth of April, in the fourth yeare of the reigne of William and Mary, King and Queene of England, &c., Annoq̃ Domi'r, 1692, before me, Porter Paul, notary and tabellion publick, legally admitted and sworne, dwelling in London, and in the presence of the witnesses hereunder subscribed personally appeared Daniel Coxe, of London, doctor in physick, who hath made, ordained, constituted, deputed and appointed as by these presents he doth make, ordayne, constitute, depute and appoint Jeremiah Basse, of West New Jersey in America, (at present in London,) minister, to be his true and lawfull attorney and assigne, for him constituent and in his name and to his use and behoof, to ask, demand, levy, recover and receive of and from any person or persons whatsoever in the provinces of New England, New York, East and West Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, or elsewhere in America, all such sune and sunes of money, goods, effects and merchandizes, which any person or persons in the provinces and places aforesaid or elsewhere in America, is, or are, shall or may be owing and indebted for, hath or have in his or their hands, custody or possession, due, owing, belonging or appurtaining unto the said constituent, bee it by bond, bill, account, specially unto or arrears of rent, consignment of goods, or their proceeds or otherwise, for what account or for what cause or reason soever, with power to settle, adjust, and balance accounts, compound, conclude and agree all differences upon receipts, to give acquittances and discharges in due forme.

Also to enter upon and take possession for and in the name of the constituent of all such lands, tenements and hereditaments in the provinces and places aforesaid, or elsewhere in America, as doth belong and appurtayne to the said constituent, and the possessor and possessors thereof if need bee to expell and put out; and the same to lease, grant and demise to any person or persons whatsoever for such terme of yeares, and upon such termes and conditions as

his said attorney shall thinke fitt, and for that purpose to lease and execute such grants of demise or other writings as the case shall require, and the counterparts thereof for and in his name to accept and receive, and to order, govern and manage the said lands, tenements and hereditaments as his said attorney shall think for the most advantage of the said constituent; and the rents, issues and profits thereof to collect, gather and receive, and upon receipt to give acquittances and discharges for the same, and if need be to appear in any court or courts, before all Lords, Judges and Justices there to answer, defend and reply in all matters and causes touching or concerning the premises.

To doe, say, persue, seize, arrest, attach, imprison, and to condemne and out of prison again to deliver.

And generally to execute and perform any lawful act or acts, matter or thing whatsoever which in and about the premises shall be needful and convenient, as fully and amply to all intents and purposes as the constituent himselfe might or would doe if personally present, with power to substitute one or more attornies under his said attorney and the same againe to revoke. The constituent promising to hold for firm and valid all and whatsoever his said attorney, or his substitutes, shall lawfully doe or cause to be done in and about the premises by virtue of these presents.

In witness whereof, the said constituent hath hereunto putt his hand and seale the day and year aforesaid.

DAN. COXE, with a seale.

SEALE.

Sealed and delivered in presence of

JO. BRURE, THO. LAWRANCE.

(LOCUS SIGILLIS) In testimonium veritatis.
(LA BELLISNAT.)

P. PAUL NOTS PUBS.

To all that shall see these presents or hear them to be read, Sir Thomas Stamp, Knight, Lord Mayor, and the Aldermen or Senators of the city of London, doe hereby make known and certifie that on the day of the date hereof, in their Majestys' Court, holden before us in the Chamber of the Guildhall of the said city, personally came and appeared Daniel Cox, of London, doctor in physick, and did then and there before us, and in presence of Porter Paul, notary and tabellion publick, seale and execute to the use of Jeremiah Basse, of West New Jersey, in America, at present in London, minister the procuracon or letters of attorney herebefore written, for the intents and purposes therein intended and contayned. And wee doe alsoe certifie that the said Porter Paul is a notary and tabellion publick, legally by authority admitted and sworne, dwelling near the Royall Exchange of this city; and that to acts, instruments, procuraciory or letters of attorney and other writings by him signed and attested, full faith and creditt is given in judgment court, and without like as wee doe give faith and creditt to the same.

In faith and testimony whereof wee have caused the seale of ye office of mayorality of ye said city of London to be putt and affixed to these presents.

Dated in London the eight and twentieth day of Aprill, Anno Domini 1692, in

ye fourth year of ye reigu of our sovereigne lord and lady, William and Mary King and Queen of England, &c.

LIGHTS, SEC.

{LOCUS SIGILL)
{OFFIS MAJOR.}

The next and perhaps the most important matter to be considered by the Society, was to secure the services of some suitable person as business agent to look after and manage their affairs in New Jersey. In this capacity there were many important duties to discharge—the selection of the most desirable tracts of land for location; to see the surveys were made in a proper manner, and that rights were correctly placed thereon, so as to avoid litigation or the interference of other claimants; to purchase goods for the use of the colony, and select proper persons to sell the same, so as to promote the settlement of the territory and advance the society's pecuniary interests; to induce emigration and secure the sale of land to actual settlers. To accomplish all this the person must have good business qualifications and some knowledge of the place where these advantages were to be developed, and the Society very naturally followed in the footsteps of Daniel Coxe, and selected Jeremiah Basse as their agent, six days after he was appointed by Daniel Coxe as his attorney.

Jeremiah Basse was at this time in London, and no doubt in constant intercourse with his patrons, having but a short time before gone from America there. His authority to act as their agent is copied and immediately follows:

Sr. Thomas Lane, Knt. Edmund Harrison, Esq., and the rest of the Committee for the West New Jersey Society, to our Trusty and Wel-beloved Jeremiah Basse, Greeting:

GENTLEMAN:—Wee, reposing special trust and confidence in the fidelity, prudence, knowledge and provident circumspection of you, the said Jeremiah Basse, have made, constituted and ordained, and by these presents, doe make, constitute and ordain you to be our Agent in West New Jersey aforesaid, to take up lands there, to inspect and direct ye selling and buying of our goods, and to act, observe and doe to the best of your power, all such other matters as concern your respective employments as aforesaid. And wee doe hereby command all our ffactors and servants in West Jersey aforesaid, to give you, the said Jeremiah Basse, due respect as to our agent doth appertaine. And you are to observe and follow all such orders and directions as you already have or hereafter shall from time to time receive from us or any ffive or more of us.

In witness whereof, wee have caused our common seale to be hereunto affixed this fourth day of June, anno domini, 1692, and in the fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord and Lady William and Mary, by the Grace of God, King and Queen of England, Scotland, Ffrance and Ireland, defenders of the ffaith, &c.

{LOCUS
{SIGILLI PUB.}

THO. LANE, JOHN JURIN, ROB. MICHEL,
ROB. HACKSHAW, JAMES ST. JOHN.

The gentleman here named was a conspicuous person through all the difficulties existing in New Jersey, relating to the government of each division of the province. He crossed the ocean several times, and had much knowledge of the

condition of things hereabouts. He was a minister of the gospel, and promulgated the doctrines of the Anabaptists, much at variance with the dogmas of the established church, and contrary to the views of Friends, then an influential party in the realm. His opportunities for gathering the opinions of the people were the best, and this advantage placed him in a leading position, sometimes on the popular side, and sometimes with those willing to adhere to the demands of the Crown. He succeeded Andrew Hamilton as Governor in 1697, and so acted the year following. Some defect in the right to exercise the duties of the office created much trouble, and the next year he returned to England.

He came back with Lord Cornbury, and held several offices of trust under him, supporting his administration, and getting the ill-will of the people for so doing. When Cornbury retired, Basse was indicted and tried, but acquitted. He was suspended as an attorney, but his commission was renewed by Governor Burnett, in 1719. Much of the time he was a resident of Cape May, attending to the location and sale of land for the society in that region. The many deeds on record show him to have been an active business man, and looked closely after the interests of his employers.

He was returned as a member of the Assembly from that county in 1716, and participated in the making of laws for the province. He afterwards removed to Burlington, N. J., where he died in 1725, leaving a will. This is a curious document, in which he named the manner of his burial, the text of scripture from which the sermon was to be preached; all according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, to which, at the time of his death, he appears to have been an adherent. But two of his children survived him, Catharine Pierce, widow, and Anne Pidgeon, widow. He was accused of speculation in the affairs of the society, and many other questionable practices, growing out of the prejudices of the people toward all who followed in the footsteps of Lord Cornbury, or in any way defended his erratic course.

Immediately upon the receipt of his commission as agent of the society, Jeremiah Basse returned to New Jersey, to look after their interests. Not reporting progress, as was thought he should, an epistle was prepared December 24th, 1692, and forwarded to him, containing many suggestions from the society. The old document will be read with interest.

Jeremiah Basse, a letter from ye Society signed on their behalf by Robert Hackshaw:

MR. JEREMIAH BASSE, LONDON, ye 24th, December, 1692.

SIR:—We are not a little concerned that we have not a line from you, though ye bill by you drawn for £30 sterling in exchange for £40 New York money is come to hand and your money ordered to be paid. We are willing to put ye best construction upon our want of advice, hoping that you have written us by ye Catharine, Captain Goff, who was taken and carried by ye French to St. Mallons. For ye future when two ships come away take care to write us by both. We have already written you divers letters by this bearer to which we inform you, and now have further to acquaint you that we have lately agreed with Doctor Coxe to purchase ye remaining one-third of the land which he sold us two-thirds of in our first purchase. We also bought of him ye 4,000 acres at Cohanzey on Salem tenth side, which he saith he ordered you to take up for

him. We have further agreed with him that if you should have taken up any other land for him they should be ours. Therefore charge our account with ye disbursements for what ye may have so taken up, and let them be reckoned as part of the eight proprieties untaken up which we have bought of him, and do the like with respect to ye charge for ye 4,000 acres at Cohanzey on Salem tenth side. We cannot now send you ye copy of ye writings because they are not yet executed, but they shall be sent as soon as we can. We have ordered Mr. Westland to agree with a French cooper, now at Plymouth, who is recommended to us as a man well skilled not only in making of casks which is the thing we principally aim at, but also in making of wines and brandy. Pray try his skill in all these particulars and let him not be idle, but beproviding of a good store of oyle casks against next fishing season. And when ye season of ye year is fit for it let him exercise his talents a little in making some wine and send us a cask of each sort, the wine in a small cask and the brandy in bottles, because that cannot come in casks. We have lately received a survey of our land taken up at Cape May, copies whereof we suppose you will have in ye country. If any good chapmen present for any of our land, do not refuse them, only with the promise that you sell none of ye land that lies convenient for ye whale fishing till you hear further from us. We mean ye land upon Cape May lying next ye bay or upon ye sea coast, for that we will not yet sell. But any of ye rest you may sell. We suppose we need not remind you of giving us ample advice of all things, as well concerning ye whale fishing, fur trade, mines and minerals. Our lands in Pennsylvania, which if a good chapman offers we would willingly part with, as also the two proprieties above ye falls surveyed and purchased by the doctor of the Indians. A further purchase we have also made of the doctor which he bought of Thomas Budd, containing fifteen thousand acres of land that was allowed said Budd by the county for satisfaction of a debt of £1,250, which they owed said Budd, and for which Doctor Coxe paid the said Budd, is said to be the best land in the province. Pray give us your thoughts of it, and if you can have chapmen that will buy it for twelve pounds per hundred acres, which price the doctor assures us it will yield, you may sell what you can of it, only reserving to us some part of it near the river where the best oaks grow, for the doctor tells us there are upon it the best oaks in the whole country. Doctor Coxe hath informed us that land is sold for £10 per hundred acres, but rather than fail you may sell that above the falls and in Pennsylvania for £5 per hundred acres, Jersey money or any other except that of Thomas Budd's and Cape May. You must also take care you do not sell any so as to prejudice the rest, which will be if you let them take up all of the best and none of the worst land with it. But your prudence will, in that case, we suppose, direct you better than we can. Not else till we hear from you, but that we are

Your loving friends,

ROBERT HACKSHAW.

By order of ye committee,

SIR THOMAS LANE, EDWARD HARRISON, ROBERT HACKSHAW,
 ROBERT MICHELL, WILLIAM WHITEMAN, CHARLES MICHELL,
 MORDRAY ABBOTT, JAMES BODDINGTON.

This letter shows the disappointment of the society in not receiving information from Mr. Basse in regard to its affairs placed in his hands, suggesting a means by which his correspondence would be more certain to reach its destination. It further shows that all of Doctor Coxe's interest in West New Jersey had been absorbed by the society whether of located land or unappropriated rights.

The value of the whale fisheries had not been lost sight of, and wine and brandy making was to be ventured upon as an experiment. The direction to forward samples of each showed the committee capable of discussing the merits of good liquor as well as conducting the business of the Society.

Much profit was obtained through the fisheries, as "oyle and bone" became the principal article of export, and yielded large returns. The order to their agent not to sell any land on the bay shore or sea coast that would interfere with this trade was significant, and shows the importance attached to this interest. Even before the purchase by the Society a small town had sprung up, called Cape May town (near Cape Island city), inhabited by those occupied in this exciting and dangerous business, who need go scarce any distance from the shore to capture all they wished.

The manufacturing of barrels to transport "the oyle," made it necessary that that branch of trade should be closely looked after, and suitable persons procured to conduct it. The lands in Pennsylvania, and that above the falls, (Trenton) for some reason they were desirous of selling; and in a word, the whole epistle shows their knowledge of the means of profit, and from whence the revenues were to be derived.

The reasons for delay in corresponding with his owners are not explained, and which may have been that his letters were intercepted by the French privateers, and perhaps some of the vessels freighted with "oyle and bone," captured. In March, 1695, he was a resident of Cohanzic, then in Salem county, N. J., where he is called "a merchant," and from which place he looked after the interests of the society. The next month he effected the sale of a number of tracts of land in Cape May, the largest of which contained seven hundred acres, and the smallest fifteen acres. The money consideration was generally secured by mortgage, but the royalty inserted in each deed was "*two fat Capons or Hens, delivered at Coxe Hall, Cape May, December 24th, yearly.*"

Coxe Hall stood not far from Cape May town, and was the Manor House erected by the former owner. Here was dispensed justice from a "Court's baron and a Court's leet," and where attendance was given by the Lord of the manor, to those who sought him, and where the dignity and exclusiveness of an English baron were maintained.

The twenty-fourth of December, for the delivery of the poultry as fixed by Mr. Basse, was in anticipation of the Christmas revels, which in those times extended through several days of feasting and carousal. The cause of temperance had no advocates, the evils of intemperance being apparent in every grade of society. It was no scandal to the church that the rector could drink his wardens and parishoners blind, nor anything to his discredit, if he played a good rubber of whist, or was an expert with foils. Whether Jeremiah Basse

measured his endurance, or showed his expertness in this direction does not appear, and well it is that such scenes of wassail and debauchery have passed into oblivion.

How long the royalty of "two fat capons annually" was exacted, or how long the Christinas revels were an attractive feature at Coxe Hall, are not known, and the present owners of the soil may be surprised when told their titles were subject to such a tenure.

In 1693, the county courts of Cape May were held here, at which time (March 20th) John Worlidge, Jeremiah Basse, John Jervis, Joseph Houlden and Samuel Crowell, were Justices. At that time the place was called Portsmouth, being the only village within the limits of the bailiwick. The old building stood until within a few years since, but its late occupants knew nothing of its first uses, or of the many and interesting traditions that surrounded it. In this connection there is propriety in showing that Doctor Coxe was at some pains and cost to procure the services of a clergyman among those already settled in the colony. His letter to the Rev. Thomas Bridges, here introduced, will explain itself:

A LETTER FROM DANIEL COXE, OF LONDON, ESQ., TO MR. THOMAS BRIDGES,
DATED AUGUST 5TH, 1692.

"SIR:—I received yours and returned an answer ye last month, but fearing that should not come seasonably to yr. hands, and having, I hope, a safe conveyance, I determined to neglect no opportunity whereby I might manifest ye friendship I cherish for you and confirm you in favouring a country wherein I am deeply concerned, and whose welfare I would promote for ye sake of ye inhabitants, abstracted from my own interest, which will, I am very confident be much advanced by your presence, sound doctrine and exemplary life. And I hope you will thereby reap not only ye satisfaction of having faithfull served our Great Master in ye great work of converting and confirming precious immortal souls, but I verily believe you will be rewarded with ye blessings of a quiet, pleasant, healthfull residence; and in ye love and esteeme of those who shall voluntarily come under yr. pastoral care with due maintenance; together with civill and christian respects for others of different persuasions. Besides which you will have ye authority, encouragement and assistance of those unto whom I have delegated the government of West Jersey, unto whom I have given a character of yr. person—an account of your behaviour in diverse parts wither you have been providentially called—they have signified their satisfaction in a letter which you will receive, I suppose, by ye same conveyance which brings this.

Besides, what they have proposed, I doe hereby faithfully assure you I will make you a considerable annuall allowance, to be paid you in money during my life, if you doe long continue your residence in our Province. That ye only wise God would counsell you in ye disposall of your selfe, prosper and succeed all your generous, pious designs and undertakings, is and shall be the constant, fervent prayer of him who is,

Dear Sir, your most affectionate friend and faithfull servant,
August 5th, 1692.

DAN'L COXE.

This letter shows Doctor Coxe to have been a faithful adherent to the doctrines of the established Church, and could appreciate the advantages derived from the precepts and example of a good man among the people. His "civil and christian respect for others of different persuasions" is evidence of his liberality in that direction, at once commendable as a professor and a gentleman.

His assurance of a liberal provision for his maintenance, while there, convinced Mr. Bridges of his sincerity, and which he was able to extend for such valuable services. Doctor Coxe also induced the West New Jersey Society to extend a like invitation to the reverend gentleman, couched in very much the same language and with other assurances of support. The letter is also copied in full :

A LETTER FROM YE WEST JERSEY SOCIETY IN ENGLAND TO MR. BRIDGES,
DATED JULY 29th, 1692.

"LONDON, ye 29 July, 1692.

SIR:—We are informed by Dr. Coxe that you declare yourselfe inclined together with divers other inhabitants of the Bermudas to remove unto and reside in West Jersey. Wee are very glad a person of yr. principles and profession should entertaine such thoughts, ffor having received an honest character of you from diverse, wee expect not only benefitt should accrue unto the inhabitants by ye pious instructions, accompanied with an exemplary life, but also by your prudential council in refference to civil and secular affaires wherein you have been providentially necessiated to express yr. selfe, and as wee have been assured, very successfully.

Sr, if you are confirmed in yr resolution wee shall give you all ye encouragement, countenance and authority wee are capable of. Many persons in diverse parts of ye country have frequently expressed their desire of a minister, and assure us they will contribute toward his comfortable subsistence and pay him all that duty, respect and deference his worke deserves. And for that Dr. Coxe hath conveyed unto us ye government of the country, with great part of his land. For your encouragement on your arrivall wee will give order that you may in what situation you please, take up two thousand acres—one thousand to be your own in fee forever—the other to be annexed unto yr. office, and descend unto him who shall succeed you whensoever it shall please God by your death or otherwise to cause a vacancy.

Wee are besides contriving some other methods whereby to render your station more comfortable, honourable and profitable, and doubt not but wee shall conclude to your full satisfaction, and all these who accompanying you shall find fair dealing, encouragement, protection and assistance from.

Sr your affectionate friends and servants,

THOMAS LANE,	EDMUND HARRISON,	EDWARD RICHER,
WILLIAM WRIGHTMAN,	JAMES BODDINGTON,	ROBERT MICHEL,
JOHN JURIN,	JAMES ST. JOHN.	

These documents show that the pressure of other interests did not crowd out that which was to give character and stability to their enterprise: the dissemination of religious principles, without restriction as to opinion or restraint as to practice. Nothing is more patent in the construction of the several forms of

government of the colonies settled on the Delaware river, than that all should enjoy their religious views in peace, with "none to make them afraid."

According to the rules of the Society April 18th, 1692, a Register of Deeds was appointed, in the person of Thomas Revel, who then lived at Burlington, N. J., and whose record of their conveyances and many other transactions show how faithfully he discharged the duties of his office.

It appears that after the appointment of Jeremiah Basse, as before named, a person named Nathaniel Westland was associated with him by the Society in the same capacity, and October 6th, 1693, both commissions were revoked and they reappointed the same day. When Westland was first associated with Mr. Basse, or for what purpose, there is no record, as he was not a party to the deeds before named nor appears in any other transaction of the Society. Jeremiah Basse appointed Joshua Barkstead as his assistant to locate and sell land (November 1st, 1694). The same year, September 13th, he made a location for the Society of 10,000 acres on Cohanzie river; May 28th, 1699, he located for the Society 10,000 acres on the Delaware river in Burlington (now Hunterdon) county, adjoining a survey of 30,000 acres before made for the Society; two days after he made another survey of 22,000 acres for the Society, in the same county, fronting on the Delaware river; June 1st, 1699, he located for the Society, 10,000 acres on Cohanzie river; June 2d, 1699, he located for the Society 12,000 acres bounding on Alloways creek and Cohanzie river; June 3d, 1699, he located for the Society 1,000 acres on Delaware bay. The three last were re-surveyed for the Society by order of Lewis Morris, in 1716. Barkstead was half-brother of Basse, a merchant, and resided at Cohanzie. He was the owner of a tract of land in Salem county, and March 30th, 1695, conveyed the same to his mother, Madam Mary Basse, widow of London, and Francis Barkstead, and the brother also of London, to be held by them in trust for himself and Jeremiah Basse.

From the 19th to the 23d day of April, inclusive, (1695), Jeremiah Basse was busy in perfecting the titles to the purchasers of land in Cape May, as in that time he executed twenty-nine deeds, and in most cases accepted a mortgage for the purchase money. In these many names of the old families in that part of the State may be found—thus identifying them with the first settlers of the country.

No other deeds appear to have been executed by him as attorney for the West New Jersey Society, so far as the records show, and May 16th, following, he conveyed to Thomas Revel 24,000 acres of the Society's land, so the sales might be continued during his absence, as he was about to sail for England, and did so soon after that date. Thomas Revel was named as trustee, in said deed, for the purposes set out, which gave him authority to make good and sufficient titles for the land by him sold. Settlers continued to come in and Thomas Revel's operations extended over two years, much to the satisfaction of the gentlemen owners in London. Some of these sales, however, were for land above the falls, and generally for larger quantities than those made in the lower part of the State.

The last official act of Jeremiah Basse, before his departure for England, was (June 9th, 1695) to appoint Joshua Barkstead and Joseph Houlden to prevent waste on the Society's lands, and to assist Thomas Revel in the collection of

money due from the new comers. These depredations were doubtless upon the cedar timber for shingles and staves, and upon the pine timber for tar and turpentine—all articles of export to the West Indies and which yielded considerable revenue to the Society.

It may be said that the propensity for appropriating the produce of other persons cedar swamps and pine lands in this way was not confined to that generation of Jerseymen, but has shown itself, as opportunity offered, to the present day, the vigilance and care of the owners to the contrary notwithstanding. "Swamp angels," an appellation applied to such thieves, generally eluded the keenest watchers, carrying on their operations in the deep recesses of the forests, and far from any road, path or habitation. Their plunder was removed in the night and sold to persons no better than themselves at half the legitimate value.

The manufacture of tar was not so easily accomplished, for the reason that the odor of the burning kiln would be carried to great distances in the atmosphere, and a person familiar with it and an adept in woodcraft could "smell it out." This sometimes took days and nights to accomplish, as well to discover the persons concerned, as to be sure the tar is in kegs before its capture, or the kiln would be fired and the whole destroyed. It is to be supposed, therefore, that Joshua and Joseph were experts in woodcraft, and whose nasal qualifications had been tested and could be depended upon in such emergencies.

In the order of time, September 20th, 1700, Andrew Hamilton, Esq., was appointed attorney in East Jersey, to have general charge of all lands belonging to the Society in that part of the State. Much trouble originated with the "squatters," who were found to have houses and farms within the bounds of the surveys, and very slow to acknowledge the rights of the Society or remove from the premises. In 1735, Lewis Morris, Jr., by request of his father (Lewis Morris), visited the great tract bounding on the Delaware and Raritan rivers, and found ninety-eight families, occupying more than thirteen thousand acres of land, and permanently settled thereon, without a shadow of title to the soil.

That bane of the Society, and which was a constant source of trouble and loss, soon began to come to the surface—the dishonesty or incapacity of their agents. September 12th, 1703, Lewis Morris was appointed attorney, with power to settle with Jeremiah Basse and Nathaniel Westland, the former agents. These persons were in default with their money accounts, nor could the Society discover what amount of land had been sold by them, or get any proper statement in regard to their affairs. In a letter from Col. Lewis Morris to his son, Lewis Morris, Jr., dated August 1st, A. D. 1735, (Chelsea, near London, E.,) among many other papers to be forwarded to the father by the son from New Jersey, were some in relation to Basse's transactions in Cape May, and the building of the ship Burlington, before 1700, by Basse, for the Society, evidently showing that much dissatisfaction existed touching Basse's and Westland's proceedings.

The same difficulties seemed to follow with other employees of the society, and no clear and satisfactory statement of the amount of lands located, leased or sold, or the amount of money secured, to be paid or received, could be had. The society was always at the mercy of their agents, for the reason that the broad ocean intervened, and no means could be adopted that would remedy the evil. Honest and capable men were no doubt employed, but designing persons

could place them in a false position, and sometimes procure their discharge from the company's employ. The true history of these difficulties cannot now be traced, but enough may be seen to establish this conclusion, and prove it to have been the source of more trouble than any other in the association.

To follow Jeremiah Basse through his business relations with the society, it appears that while he was Governor of the two provinces, he appointed Joshua Barkstead (October 25th, 1698) his assistant attorney, with general powers, being simply a continuance of the same duties and authority before named. The residence of this person was suitable for a proper charge of the large tracts of land in lower West New Jersey, owned by the society, and his frequent examination thereof, made him a proper judge of their value when selected by persons wishing to purchase.

July 19th, 1699, Andrew Hamilton began his duties in the sale of lands, and many tracts, in larger or smaller quantities in West Jersey were disposed of by him. One month after the date of his power of attorney, these duties were enlarged by another paper from the society, directing him to procure a settlement with *all* other agents, and forward their accounts for examination. Something was accomplished by this manœuvre, but it imposed on him much trouble, and frequently abuse. This gentleman did not live to carry out the purpose intended, as September 12th, 1703, Lewis Morris was appointed attorney, and directed to obtain from Hamilton's executors, the papers belonging to the society, and close all accounts relating thereto. He was an efficient officer, and had he lived, would have secured his employers much money and future future embarrassment.

Next in order of time came Lewis Morris as agent and attorney, whose business relations with the Society extended over more than thirty years, commencing in 1703. He was a noticeable individual in the colony, whose conduct in his official relations did not receive the censure that fell upon many others. In 1738, he accepted from the home government a commission as Governor of East and West New Jersey, the two colonies being separated from New York. An extended notice of him here is unnecessary, as the fourth volume of the New Jersey Historical Society is devoted exclusively to a sketch of his life and character., by William A. Whitehead, Esq., that persevering and reliable antiquarian. As business agent of the West New Jersey Society, he appears to have rendered satisfaction and ended his duties without blame. In 1735, being in London, he addressed a letter to his son, Lewis Morris, Jr., in New Jersey, to forward to him the papers of the Society in his case, the directions therein given showing him to be a systematic and correct business man. March 8th, 1720, and under his orders, the island in Delaware river, opposite Burlington, was located to the Society, containing 350 acres. He sold but little of the Society's land in the lower counties, but gave his attention to re-surveying lands already taken up, and thus avoiding many disputes with prior purchasers and settlers thereon. The lands re-surveyed lay in Cumberland and Cape May counties.

In March, 1739, Henry Young, a Deputy Surveyor, located 23,054 acres of land for the Society in Cumberland county, N. J., generally known as the "23,000-acre tract." In 1796 an attempt was made resurvey this tract, by Elnathan Davis, one of the most careful and reliable deputies in the employ of

the Council of Proprietors. He made much effort to avoid and settle disputes with adjoining owners, but upon the return of his work to the Surveyor-General several caveats were filed to the allowance of the re-survey by the Council. The controversies relating thereto covered a period of eight years, and the owners finally withdrew the re-survey and abandoned their purpose. The greatest trouble was with "inside owners"—those holding lands, generally cedar swamps—within the boundaries. The value of these swamps made them worth contention, and the best talent among lawyers and surveyors was secured by parties interested. Arbitrators, or juries of view were called and the "oldest inhabitants," ancient trees, stumps, stakes and stones, questioned and shown to maintain the pro or con of the case. This would appear like a floating court, yet, in matters of boundary dispute, substantial justice is more certainly reached than in any other way. With many such difficulties still existing, Phineas Bond, as attorney, conveyed this tract of land to Samuel Clement, Clement Hall and John Blackwood, June 18th, 1803. They soon after resold large parts of it, some other parts, however, remaining in the family of Clement Hall until a recent date.

February 10th, 1730, Joseph Murray, Jeremiah Lattochick and Joseph Haines, succeeded Lewis Morris in the duties before named, and carried on the sale of land with much more energy than their predecessors. William Shinn was also appointed during the term of the three persons last named, (May 9th, 1739,) but he does not appear to have been a very active person in the sale of land in the lower counties.

June 9th, 1748, Henry Young, again in the employ of these agents for the Society, located 33,078 acres of land in Gloucester county, (now Atlantic,) and May 1st, 1750, the same deputy made an adjoining survey of 36,241 acres for the Society.

These locations were resurveyed in 1773, and found to contain an overplus of 8,738 acres, showing how the Proprietors had suffered in their rights, and that by the hands of their sworn deputies. This was not an isolated case, but can be traced to nearly all the locations of that day—an evil so palpable that the whole system of making surveys had to be changed.

The two surveys last named called the "Great Egg Harbor tract," are now generally known as the "Weymouth land," and were conveyed by Phineas Bond, agent for the Society, (December 15th, 1802,) to Charles Shoemaker, George Ashbridge, Morris Robinson, John Paul and Joseph M. Paul.

This afterwards became part of the estate of William Richards, now deceased, and in possession of whose descendants, portions of the original tract still remain.

December 6th, 1748, Henry Young, before named, also located 4,000 acres of land in Cape May county for the society.

August 16th, 1749, the letters of Joseph Murray, Jeremiah Lattochick and Joseph Haines, were revoked, and the same day Henry Lane, Lewis Johnson and John Foye, were appointed in their stead.

These last named persons all looked closely after the interests of the association, and conveyed large quantities of land; John Foye, however, but seldom being a party to the deeds, and was February 1, 1749 discharged from the commission. This was done by revoking the letters of the three persons, and the

same day re-appointing Henry Lane and Lewis Johnson. These gentlemen continued to represent the society, until May 7th, 1752, when their authority was set aside, but on the same day new letters were issued to them to continue the same service. The reason for this is not apparent, and is one of the many inexplicable acts of the association in its conduct of affairs in New Jersey. Lewis Johnson appears to have had general management, and was a man of more than ordinary ability. In one instance, however, he was over-reached by an old resident of Cape May, in a real estate transaction, and which brought upon him the censure of the society. The various sales of land in Cape May county, by its agents and attornies, and sometimes with boundaries not too well defined, involved what remained to the society, in some doubt. To avoid expense and further complications, Lewis Johnson offered all the unsold portion of the society's land at private sale.

Connected with the soil were certain natural privileges—that of fishing and fowling—regarded as valuable by the inhabitants, who took steps to negotiate with the agent for the purchase. In 1752, a number of the people formed an Association to carry out this object, and secure not only the title to the remainders of the Society's land in the county, and the natural privileges as well. The movements of the Association were so tardy, that Jacob Spicer, one of their number, proceeded to secure the estate for himself, and succeeded in his purpose, by making a visit to Perth Amboy, and obtaining an interview with the agent, doubtless after he had made himself familiar with the subject in question. Much time was consumed, and the would-be purchaser discovering that Mr. Johnson had some good convivial qualities, did not hesitate to indulge them.

In the course of the negotiations and while the agent was deep in his cups a deed was obtained August 7th, 1756, conveying said remainders to Jacob Spicer, for the sum of three hundred pounds—an amount of money palpably inadequate for the estate disposed of. Lewis Johnson being so well satisfied in after years that the Society had been wronged, in his will made a bequest of one thousand pounds to the Society as part payment of what was due it in this transaction.

When this purchase became known in Cape May county, much commotion was caused thereby, and the grantee to the title received little else than abuse from his neighbors and former friends, among whom was his old associate Aaron Leaming. The controversy was long and bitter, and culminated in a public meeting being held in the Presbyterian church (March 26th, 1761.)

Aaron Leaming on behalf of the people propounded several questions to Jacob Spicer, which not being answered satisfactorily, a suit in chancery was threatened. The purchaser of the soil and natural privileges could not be intimidated, and continued to hold the estate until his decease, not however, molesting the people in any way in their fishing and fowling, when the whole passed under his will to his son Jacob, who in 1795 conveyed these rights to an association. Subsequently the Legislature passed acts of incorporation strengthening their title and enlarging their powers, going far to establish the rights of the riparian owners to lands under water touching the shores of the State of New Jersey.

The validity of these titles has since been questioned, and at this writing the decisions of the courts and the acts of the Legislature have well nigh ignored

them. Jacob Spicer never recovered the confidence and respect of the citizens of Cape May county, and his old friend and companion, Aaron Leaming, refused even after the public meeting of March 26th, 1761, to recognize him.

Thus ended the claim of the Society to land in that bailiwick, and those who have need of tracing the title to property in that section may do well to remember that much the larger portion thereof is based on the locations made to Dr. Daniel Coxe.

June 10th, 1756, Daniel Elmer, a deputy employed by Lewis Johnson, as representative of the Society, re-surveyed a tract of land in Cumberland county, bounding on Delaware river and Back creek, containing by his return 1,828 acres.

This policy of the agent to resurvey the large tracts was a judicious one, and an easy means of discovering the claims of other persons and adjusting them without resort to law.

January 25th, 1760, George May was appointed agent for the Society. He was a resident of Gloucester county, N. J., having made a settlement on Great Egg Harbor river, now known as May's Landing, the county town of Atlantic county. No conveyances appear in his name, and he probably only had charge of the lands in keeping off trespassers, the selling of timber and payment of taxes.

Henry Lane, the associate of Lewis Johnson, having died, new letters of attorney were issued (August 16th, 1761), reappointing Lewis Johnson and supplying the place of Henry Lane with John Smith. This appointment continued until February 2d, 1769, when John Hunt succeeded that gentleman and assumed the business of the Society. He was also directed to settle the accounts of the last preceding agents.

April 22d, 1772, new letters were issued to him, but it does not appear that he made sale of much land in the lower counties.

About this time several surveys were made to the Society in Gloucester county. One called the "Little Society" is now included in the Winslow tract, while others have been subdivided and their identity lost sight of.

July 2d, 1787, Robert Morris, of New Brunswick, New Jersey, was appointed attorney, and many important matters came under his notice. Several controversies were settled during his administration, relating to disputed titles, boundaries, right of possession, and other troubles incident to the ownership of real estate. His letters were revoked May 17th, 1793. He was followed by Phineas Bond, (January 6th, 1801) and with whom was associated Thomas Cadwallader, appointed to act in the absence of Mr. Bond. The last named gentleman held the position of Consul General of Great Britain, for the middle and southern States of the United States, and was a man of character and influence.

He also encountered the same difficulties of his last predecessor, and had much to do in the settlement of claims set up against the Society.

Some doubts existing as to "the clearness and fullness" of the first letters of attorney to Phineas Bond, others were forwarded to him, bearing date June 1st, 1802, and under which he carried out several contracts by him made in the sale of lands and other routine business of the Society.

The agents of the Society at different times sold and conveyed shares and

parts of shares of propriety, and large amounts of rights or acres to various persons, under the several dividends as made by the Council of Proprietors, which may be discovered by examination of the records, in the office of the Surveyor-General, at Burlington, New Jersey.

No other location was made in the name of the Society, that appears of record, and its right in that direction in New Jersey was extinguished by the conveyance of twenty-two whole shares of propriety, by Thomas Cadwallader, agent for the Society, to Benjamin B. Cooper, Esq., of Gloucester county, New Jersey, by deed dated June 28th, A. D., 1814, who, as an active, enterprising and successful operator in real estate, found means to use many acres to his own advantage, and sold large quantities of rights to persons to be applied in the same manner.

The existence of the Society has been preserved from the organization to the present, in London, where many of the owners and their descendants, lived and still remain; where the books and papers are carefully preserved, and where remainders of funds, due to legal representatives are held, to be promptly paid, when claimants prove their identity with those from whom such claims have come.

May 23d, 1876, the following notice appeared in the *Daily News*, a newspaper published in London, E. "West New Jersey Society.—The personal representatives of the proprietors undermentioned, described in 1692-3, as understated, on whose shares in the stock of this Society, no dividends have been paid, are invited to make their claims, legally supported, prepaid, to F. Wickings Smith, Esq., 63 Lincoln's Inns fields, London, viz: Joseph Colyer, linen draper; Josiah Davis, merchant; Peter Delaynoy, gentleman; Peter Fowks, gentleman; Nathaniel Gifford, gentleman; Benjamin Levy, merchant; Joseph Micklethwaite, merchant; Thomas Miller, merchant; Thomas Morris, merchant; William Sheppard, goldsmith; Edward West, gentleman, all of London.

One-half of Edward West's shares became the property of Joseph Syms, under whose will made 1736, they passed to his seven nieces, the daughters of his sister Elizabeth Stone, whose personal representatives are now entitled to them."

For the purpose of disposing of the funds, amounting to perhaps \$50,000, now in the custody of the Society, Chancery proceedings have been commenced, and the Master of the Rolls has directed an inquiry to be made touching the ownership of the said funds. Many claimants have presented themselves, but the lapse of time since the organization of the Society, and the rigid inquiries made into titles and family connections, under the rules of the court, disappoint a large majority of those who covet the treasure.

The Society has its meetings, directors are elected, and a good English dinner is discussed at the beginning of each year. All the formula is gone through with in the appointment of officers—reports of committees and investment of funds, as in the days of its prosperity—and will so continue until the decree of the court orders a distribution of the moneys reported, and the articles of corporation dissolved.

But it will sometimes happen, when the titles to portions of the land in New

Jersey are to be traced to their origin, that questions will be asked touching the beginning, the operations and the end of the West New Jersey Society. And it will require patient search among the ancient time-stained records, relating to the first conveyances of land, as well as into the documents showing the political disturbances in the colony, in its early endeavor toward a representative government; to answer these interrogatories.

Much of the mystery that bears upon the conflict of authority among the owners and settlers in the colony, and affected the success of the enterprise as well, may find its solution by a thorough and careful analysis of the transactions of the West New Jersey Society. Many of these records and documents may be found here, but others have always been retained by the Society in London, and may never come within reach of the historian.

